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INTELLIGENCE

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Central Intelligence Bulletin

State Dept. review completed

Top Secret

C 210

16 November 1967

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Approved For Release 2003/05/19 : CIA-RDP79T00975A010500130001-0

Approved For Release 2003/05/19 : CIA-RDP79T00975A010500130001-0

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Thailand: Bangkok is taking a tougher line in negotiating a status-of-forces agreement with the US.

The chief Thai negotiator recently suspended further discussions until the US agreed to meet Thai demands regarding the wording of the draft agreement. He told US officials that the criminal jurisdiction issue was the key problem, and stated that Thailand would not grant the broad authority the US enjoyed in other countries.

He also indicated that Bangkok would prefer no agreement at all to protracted negotiations or a treaty which did not reflect the "unique" relationship between the US and Thailand. He stated that if a satisfactory solution was not reached soon the Thai government would begin to exercise jurisdiction over US military personnel in many cases in which it has heretofore waived responsibility.

Although this unyielding position may in part be only a negotiating posture, it reflects the sensitivity of the Bangkok leaders to charges that they have not been sufficiently solicitous of Thai national interests in relations with the US. Certain Thai leaders have long believed that the US has taken Thai support for granted. Increased domestic political activity in preparation for elections expected next year will put a further strain on US-Thai relations in the coming months.

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Algeria: The dispute between Col Boumediene and his Chief of Staff, Col Tahar Z'Biri, is still not resolved.

Z'Biri, claiming his primary objective is a return to collegial rule, demands that three of Boumediene's henchmen--the foreign, interior, and finance ministers--be dismissed. He seems confident that a majority of the members of the Revolutionary Council will support him.

Boumediene, who has been bypassing the council for several months because of its incessant bickering, is stalling about convening it now until he lines up enough support to quash Z'Biri's charges against the ministers.

A French press report claims that a good offices commission of Algerian officials has been set up to mediate the differences between the two.

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